

CIA OPERATIONS CENTER

NEWS SERVICE

Date. 7 Oct 76Item No. 4Ref. No. STAT

DISTRIBUTION II

N105

R

ASSASSINATION COMMITTEE

BY DAVID C. MARTIN

WASHINGTON (AP) -- THE CHIEF INVESTIGATOR FOR A HOUSE PROBE INTO THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN KENNEDY AND DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING INDICATED TODAY HE INTENDS TO QUESTION PRESIDENT FORD, FORMER TEXAS GOV. JOHN CONNALLY AND KENNEDY'S WIDOW, JACQUELINE ONASSIS.

AT HIS SWEARING-IN CEREMONY, ACTING CHIEF COUNSEL RICHARD SPRAGUE SAID THE INQUIRY COULD TAKE YEARS.

OF FORD, SPRAGUE TOLD REPORTERS, "I'M SURE (THE INVESTIGATION) WILL INCLUDE HIM." OF CONNALLY AND MRS. ONASSIS, HE SAID THERE IS "NO DOUBT THAT THEY WILL" BE QUESTIONED.

FORD SERVED AS A MEMBER OF THE WARREN COMMISSION, WHICH CONCLUDED IN 1964 THAT LEE HARVEY OSWALD WAS THE SOLE ASSASSIN OF THE PRESIDENT. CONNALLY WAS SERIOUSLY WOUNDED IN THE NOVEMBER 1963 TRAGEDY.

REP. THOMAS DOWNING, D-VA., CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS, CALLED SPRAGUE "A HARD-NOSED COMPETENT PROSECUTOR WHO HAS NO PRE-CONCEPTIONS" ABOUT THE RUMORS SURROUNDING THE KENNEDY SLAYING AND THE APRIL 1968 MURDER OF KING.

"HE'S LIKE A BULLDOG," DOWNING SAID OF SPRAGUE. "WE'RE GOING TO TURN HIM LOOSE."

SPRAGUE IS BEST KNOWN FOR SUCCESSFULLY PROSECUTING FORMER UNITED MINE WORKERS PRESIDENT TONY BOYLE FOR THE MURDER OF UNION INSURGENT JOSEPH YABLONSKI.

BOTH DOWNING AND REP. HENRY GONZALEZ, D-TEX., WHO IS CONSIDERED LIKELY TO BECOME CHAIRMAN WHEN DOWNING RETIRES AT THE END OF THE YEAR, HAVE EXPRESSED THE BELIEF THAT A CONSPIRACY WAS BEHIND THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION.

over